What's Your Poison?

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What's Your Poison?

by nike_of_samothrace

Summary

On a walk after a day of hardening, an exhausted Eren and Historia stumble upon an abandoned cabin that was ready to ambush whoever walked in first.

or,

Eren falls into a trap, and Levi is there to put him back together with his squad.

Notes

so really this is like kind of a sickfic I guess? I'm on a ROLL, like I will not write anything for forty weeks and then I'll have this burst of words that gets turned into a fic and posted here for you! I'm not sure if there will be weeks of silence after this or not. time will tell. anyway I poisoned eren have fun and enjoy :P

See the end of the work for more notes

It was just supposed to be a short walk. After supper and a long day of Eren practicing his hardening, a walk was the perfect way to unwind.

Eren was still healing from the hardening earlier. Levi had said, *don't go alone, brat*, and Mikasa was on dishes that night. Historia quickly volunteered to go as well, itching to get out of the close quarters in their current building. To let out some steam from the day.

Upon arriving to said current building a few days ago, it looked as though it had been abandoned, and the squad spent half a day cleaning the place to Levi's liking. But that building looked like a mansion compared to the one Eren and Historia were standing in front of now, in the evening light.

It was either one storey, or two storeys with a loft making up the second. The foundation was made up of stone that was crumbling at the edges, and the walls were made of wood logs, some of which were soft and rotting. Windows had no glass, just crooked boards covering the opening. A broken bench was next to the front door.

"It looks abandoned," Historia said, standing on her toes to try and see through the broken boards on the window. "I wonder who used to live here. And why they fortified the place."

Eren tried the rusted handle that hung half attached to the front door. "Locked. And broken, anyway."

Ivy covered the wall on the next side, and any windows that there may have been. It grew tangled and intwined on the sturdy logs, with dead biomass underneath a fresh, aggressive new wave.

Around the back, there was another, smaller door. Eren approached it first haphazardly, but then with confidence, banging his fist against the wood. "Is there anybody in there?"

Historia's stomach jumped at the loud greeting. If there *was* someone there, now that person knew they were there, too. She kissed their anonymity goodbye.

"Nothing," Eren grumbled, unsatisfied.

Historia waited an extra moment, and there was in fact no noise from the cabin that indicated someone was inside. Curiosity grew in the place of fear. "Maybe I'll look for an entrance to a cellar."

Historia traversed to the adjacent wall of the back door, which was where Eren remained.

Eren tried this door handle. It was also rusted, but had fancy engravings etched along the edges. With a snap, his thumb applied pressure, and the door was open.

It wasn't an easy opening; it was like the door hadn't been opened in years. It took effort to push it inwards, scraping across the stone floor with flaked wood on the door's bottom. This door needed to be put out of its misery. Perhaps they could have a nice bonfire, tomorrow.

Inside was completely dark. The air was stuffy and cold, like it hadn't been breathed in years. Eren took a step in, and the heavy door slammed shut behind him once he let it go.

Right after it closed, everything happened very slowly. There was a click, followed by what sounded like metal unsheathing to Eren. The hairs on the back of his neck stood to attention as he felt a slight gust of wind, narrow and quick, in front of his face until his chest was set on fire.

No, not fire. He was struck by something, and it sent him back a few steps, until he collapsed onto his knees and tried to hunch over to quell the pain.

Yet, he couldn't. There was something stabbed into his abdomen, long and metal. What it was, Eren couldn't see in the pitch-black darkness of the room. But he could feel the cool, rough firmness of something cold and thin. He could feel blood rapidly seeping into the fabric of his shirt.

Pull it out was his first thought, but it was countered by *keep it in.* They had all done first aid in cadets. With a stab wound, Eren remembered the procedure being to apply pressure around the object, keeping it in place. But that was for normal people. He was a titan shifter. What was the procedure for a titan shifter? He wasn't even a normal titan shifter. He couldn't shift. He had just spent the entire day shifting, and his titans had gotten shittier with each transformation.

Historia. Historia was around the cabin somewhere. She could help, unless she got stuck in another trap as well. Because that's what this was- a trap. Whoever lived in this now abandoned cabin must have been a paranoid psychopath to have set this up.

Suddenly, Eren didn't want Historia anywhere around him. He might heal- he *hoped* he'd heal- but if he were a regular person, this could have been fatal. That brought him back to what he should do. Leave it in? Or pull it out?

"Eren?" Historia called, muffled from outside. "What was that noise?"

Eren opened his mouth to answer, to tell her not to come in, but all that came out was a cry of pain. Moving even the slightest inch sent him flying into a whirlwind of agony. *Leave it in*, he guessed.

"Eren!"

The door burst open, and evening light streamed into the room, illuminating the disturbed dust particles in the air. Somewhere behind the incessant blanket of pain, he heard a gasp, and Historia was in front of him in a flash.

The door was propped open. Eren opened his eyes- he didn't realise when they'd shut. But illuminated in the dark was a blade much like his own. Military issued, buried deep into his chest.

"Eren," Historia breathed, hands wavering above him and the blade, as if not knowing where to begin. "Oh, my- there was blood under the door. I don't know-"

Don't know what to do, Eren supposed. She didn't want to say it, but Historia was in the same boat as him right now.

"Can you move?" Historia asked, and Eren clenched his teeth and gave his head a sharp nod *no*. No, he would not be moving if he could help it.

Historia stood frozen for a moment, stuck in thought. Then, she quickly shrugged off her tan coat, and kneeled down in front of Eren.

"We're going to take it out."

"No," Eren gasped, not even sure if he meant it. He just wanted time to stop. The stinging in his chest to stop. To not be in this cabin, and to be sharing a bed too small for him with Armin back in that stupid building they'd been staying in. He wished that he were on dishes tonight. He wished Levi had been sterner over him leaving after the day he'd just had. It wasn't over yet, it seemed.

It was as if he were struck in the chest by lightning. Historia gave no warning- just grabbed the handle, and yanked out the bloodied blade. She threw it to the side in a clatter, and was back next to Eren, who was currently crunched over as far as his body would allow.

"I know it must hurt," she said. "But you couldn't heal with it inside you. Sit up just a little bit. Press this down."

This was Historia's coat- but Eren didn't care to notice. His eyes were closed again, pressed tight. He tried to answer, to thank her, but instead he coughed, and something warm and wet dripped on his chin.

Blood, his mind identified in a haze as some from his chin trickled onto the ground in front of him.

"We have to go," Historia said, evident of the current situation. Yet there was hesitation in her voice. "Let me-"

Her eyes went from Eren to the blade. It was similar to theirs, but laying in the light, there was something different. Close up, Historia could see a rough substance with the texture of rust, but was a faded turquoise on the silver. That was on the clean part of the blade- the part that was covered in Eren's blood had that same texture. Historia wiped her finger over a small bit of blood.

Whatever it was, it covered the edge of the entire blade. It looked intentional.

Historia elected not to say anything to Eren. But whatever it was, it couldn't have been good, and this was all the more reason to take it out.

"I can hold my jacket to you," Historia said, putting an arm around Eren. "But you'll have to walk. I can't- I can't carry you."

"No shit," Eren choked out. Historia forced a laugh in their horrible situation.

“On three,” Historia said. “One, two…”

Historia stood up a lot faster than Eren, who could barely unfold his trembling legs to stand. With her hand pressed against his chest, Historia helped as much as she could, pushing upwards on the wound. Eren was breathless the entire time, until the two took a step and leaned against the open doorframe.

At the rate they continued walking, they might arrive at the house in another twenty minutes. That wasn’t good enough for Eren, Historia thought. Behind them, staining the grass, was a spotted trail of blood, even with the help of her jacket, which was brewing with crimson. Eren looked worse than he did at the cabin- paler. Shakier. How much time did they even have?

“Eren.” Historia stopped them both at a tree, and leaned Eren against it. It was time for a judgement call. “I’m going to leave you here. I’m going to get Captain Levi. I’m going to run, so just stay here. Don’t move, and hold this, okay? Press it against your chest. *Hard*.”

As important as Historia made that last word sound, Eren couldn’t bear to hold it against the wound any more than slightly. Historia held his gaze for just a little longer, trepidation behind her eyes, before breaking out in a sprint for their base.

Eren saw steam before Levi arrived.

It was only a little, but it meant that his body wasn’t completely overwhelmed by earlier. It meant that he was healing. Slowly, but healing.

Eren thought Levi was relatively quick. He didn’t hear his captain coming- he just looked up, and suddenly he was staring him in the eyes.

Levi was snapping his fingers. “Eren. Hey. Did you hear me?”

Eren blinked. “What?”

“I said, *show me what happened*,” Levi pressed. Before Eren could even respond, Levi crouched down and moved the jacket, and saw the red stain on Eren’s shirt. Levi flipped up the fabric of the shirt, and Eren turned away, wanting to look at anything but the laceration on his chest.

Levi didn’t say anything. He just quickly pressed the jacket back against the cut, making Eren wince. Then, Eren’s feet were no longer touching the ground as he felt himself shifting up and down in Levi’s arms. He wasn’t looking again. His eyes were sealed shut. Shut as tight as possible because he had to let the pain out *somehow*, had to complete the circuit of agony he was currently in to stop it from overwhelming him. Levi was running, *fast*, and the downside of that was the searing pulse each jostle sent through Eren’s body.

Just don’t look. It’s not real. It hurts it hurts it hurts it’s not real it doesn’t hurt-

Eren turned his face into Levi's chest. It wasn't bloodstained, like his. It was sturdy as he held Eren tightly while running. Tears might have fallen from Eren's eyes from just how hard he had them pressed shut alone. But the travel was as painful as it was quick, and the door to the building was already being held open as Levi rushed them both in.

Eren heard commotion. He heard Hange asking questions, but Levi simply told his fellow soldier to go with them upstairs. Together they scaled the stairs with swiftness, and Levi placed Eren on a soft mattress; much softer than the one he and Armin shared.

"I said to hold that against it," Levi admonished, referring to the jacket. "You're not getting blood all over my bed."

Blood *would* get all over his bed, most likely, and this his captain knew. Levi imagined asking Hange to trade beds once this was all over. But somewhere, Eren felt a surge of responsibility, and he hugged the jacket to his stomach once again, curling into it.

"Nope," Levi said, pushing Eren onto his back. "Hange, where's the damn first aid kit?"

"Here!" came the response, and Hange ran over to the bed and whipped the kit open. Levi took out a roll of gauze and suture kit, giving the gauze to Hange on the other side of the bed.

"I'm not going to lie, Eren," Levi began. "This is going to hurt like hell. Stay still and look away."

"Wait," Eren panted. "Wait. I'm healing. It'll heal on its own."

"Not if you bleed out first," Levi countered, and Eren struggled to argue against that.

Levi didn't offer a warning, and Eren wanted to leave his body when he saw the first stitch go in.

Hange put a hand on Eren's arm. "Hey, Eren," she said. "How does sleeping in tomorrow morning sound?"

Eren didn't respond immediately, but he grabbed onto Hange's hand and squeezed *hard*. Hange accepted the silence as an answer in an effort to do anything to distract him.

She squeezed back.

"Done," Levi said. "Gauze."

Hange used her other hand to pass back the gauze. Eren heard Levi's confirmation, but still looked away. Looked at how Hange's glasses were just a little crooked, like always. His ears sounded like he was underwater.

"Eren," Hange said, smile turned into a concerned frown. "Listen to Levi."

Eren shifted his gaze to his other superior. *What*, he mouthed, but nothing came out.

His head felt fuzzy.

“I *said*, you need to sit up,” Levi repeated to Eren. “Here.”

Levi put a pillow against the head of the bed and pulled Eren upwards, eliciting a whimper of pain. He was sitting up, but he was dizzier than in the cabin. Was this a side effect of blood loss? Eren couldn’t remember.

Hange and Levi passed the gauze to each other until they were satisfied, and Hange snipped the end and put it back in the kit. “I’m going to go talk to Historia.”

She stood up and quietly made her way downstairs. Something at the bottom of the stairs got kicked over- likely intentionally out of frustration. Frustration at what shitty luck it was for this to happen.

Meanwhile, Levi studied Eren.

He held his subordinate’s gaze, searching for a sign of what else was wrong, because he was sure it was something. Eren looked back at him, but only momentarily before his gaze would falter and become unfocused, before snapping back into place.

“What happened, brat? I had a twenty second conversation with Historia before I found you. That’s it. Why are you out of it now?”

“Um,” Eren started. “I hit a door. No, I opened the door, to this old cabin we found, and they had some trap set up. I got stabbed.”

“Clearly,” Levi said, exhaustion laced in his tone. *Just one day without a problem*. That was all he wanted. Peace.

Still, it wasn’t the stupid brat’s fault. Levi brushed aside Eren’s bangs to feel his forehead, not knowing what else to do to figure out the situation. He wasn’t expecting anything, but it felt *hot*.

“You’re not always this hot,” Levi said, half to himself and half for Eren to confirm. He couldn’t recall whether Eren’s normal body temperature was above average or not.

“No,” Eren replied, feeling his own forehead. “I don’t think so.”

A chill wracked Eren’s body, and he leaned harder back against the pillow to subdue it.

“What was that?” Levi questioned. “You’re not normal.”

“I know that,” Eren huffed. “I don’t know. I don’t feel good.”

Levi stood up. “Okay, brat. I’m getting you water. You’ll be fine.”

Eren hummed. “How do you know?”

“Because I said so.”

That was a pretty good reason.

Eren was not fine.

When Levi returned, Eren's cheeks were flushed with red.

"Drink this," he said, holding water before Eren. But after downing the whole thing, Eren slumped back down into the bed. It wasn't without a wince at the still searing laceration in his chest, either.

Levi didn't miss it. "Try to get some sleep. Your body will thank you."

Eren only hummed in response, head muffled in the pillow.

He wasn't sure how long he lied awake after Levi left. Sleep eluded him, despite the sheer exhaustion of the day. It was impossible to get comfortable, because moving anything more than a centimetre resulted in a tsunami of pain. So, discomfort reigned supreme, and Eren stared at the ceiling for so long that the beams above him seemed to move.

Levi entered the dining room to see Hange and Historia both sitting together at the table corner. Hange's hands were folded together on the wood, and Historia jumped to attention when she saw her captain.

"At ease," he said, the words feeling strange on his lips. Usually, his squad didn't act proper enough for them to have exchanges like this, but Historia looked like she desperately wanted to say something.

"How is he?"

Levi sat down next to Hange. "Not much has changed since ten minutes ago." Ten minutes ago, when Hange had come downstairs to give Historia an update.

Historia sat back down, a little uneasy.

Hange took the reins. "Historia observed something about the blade that struck Eren."

Levi arched his brow. "Well? What is it?"

"There was some kind of *substance* on it," Historia explained, gaze floating to the creases in the table's planks. "The best thing I can explain it as is some kind of alkaline buildup. But it was only on the sharp side of the blade… so I think it was poison."

Poison. In a rustic cabin, sealed away from anyone and anything, Levi could picture the likelihood of that. But that meant that there was someone who may still have been nearby that was the resident of that cabin, and their intentions weren't good.

"Eren's not the same," Levi said. "He's confused, running a fever, and on top of that, isn't healing like he normally does. That last one is probably because of all the stress from today. His titan form got worse every time he shifted."

“So we should monitor him,” Hange said in trepidation of what might come. “And we can either investigate that cabin for an explanation now, or wait until morning. In case there are any more traps.”

“I’ll tell the brats we’re stationing two of them for the night on watch,” Levi announced. “They’ve got nothing better to do.”

“I’ll watch Eren,” a voice came from the doorway of the other room. Mikasa stood, hands folded into her arms. Her eyes were sharp, but also brimmed with concern. Everything in her posture was tense.

“No.” Levi was firm. “He needs rest. You’re first on watch down here. Go get Connie and tell him the same.”

Mikasa’s cheeks flamed, and she stared intently at her captain, waiting for him to change his mind, but he didn’t. Saying nothing else, she spun around and was gone.

“Great,” Hange said, putting her elbows on the table to rest her head. “Just who we needed to overhear that.”

Levi sighed and stood up. He was pissed off about this whole situation, at the least. Pissed at whoever set up an ambush like that. He needed to clean something. “She’ll be fine.”

As long as Eren was, too.

“Eren.”

At hearing his name being spoken by Mikasa, Eren’s head groggily turned to the door where she stood leaning against the frame. Relatively calm, for Mikasa’s standards when Eren was hurt.

“Hi,” he mumbled.

Mikasa took slow steps forward, not looking at Eren, but the floor. Her hand was playing with the yarn of her scarf. Eren tried to sit up, to be able to talk to her, but pain rippled through his body at movement. He resorted to pushing himself to his side, so he could keep seeing Mikasa. Had her hair always been that shiny?

“I came to check on you,” Mikasa said, tilting her head. “I can’t believe you fell into that trap.”

Eren’s cheeks burned, more than they already did from the fever.

“Didn’t see it,” Eren slurred, eyes half closed. But he could see Mikasa, with her arms crossed as she kneeled in front of the bed. “’T came out of nowhere, Mikasa.”

“Do you have a death wish? What’s wrong with you?”

Eren was speechless at the scolding. Mikasa shook his shoulder, as if she didn't already have his attention. As if Eren wasn't already staring through her silver eyes to her soul, which was disappointed in him. It felt so foreign.

And then Eren blinked, and it was Levi shaking his arm vigorously, with a confused- no, *baffled* look on his face.

"Look at me," he said. "What's wrong with you?"

"Captain?"

Levi lost some of his tension, but still held Eren's arm. "Yes, brat," he said. "Levi. Not Mikasa."

Eren searched Levi for any hints that he wasn't who he said he was. But the longer he stared, the more impatience he could see growing on Levi's face. That seemed right.

Nowhere in the room was Mikasa.

"She's gone," Eren spoke, looking at each of the dark corners in the room. Yet, there wasn't even a trace of anybody else. Mikasa had vanished.

"She's downstairs," Levi said, and Eren believed him. Levi could say it was raining cats and dogs, and Eren wouldn't doubt his captain for a second. Levi didn't lie. "She's been downstairs all evening."

Eren didn't quite know what to say to that.

"Stay here," Levi said, releasing Eren's arm carefully, as though he might've booked it for the hallway.

Eren didn't move a muscle. In fact, his eyes were half lidded by the time Levi returned with a stool under one arm, carrying a folded rag in one hand, and a basin in the other.

Levi plopped the stool against the wall next to his bed. The bucket went on the ground, and Eren heard Levi wring the cloth out at the dripping of water.

"I don't feel good," Eren mumbled. "I don't get it."

Levi looked down at him as if *he* got it, but didn't elaborate. Then, after a moment, said, "Illness can come on fast. We just have to ride it out."

Levi draped the cloth on Eren's forehead. It covered the top of his eyes, but he couldn't find the energy to move it. And it felt so *good*. Eren didn't know how hot and *wrong* he felt until the heat in his head started to decline.

He could still see Levi moving around the room, but couldn't make out what his captain was doing. Which was fine. It was one less thing for Eren to worry about.

“Soup,” Levi said, suddenly in front of Eren again. “It’s here for whenever you want it. You need your strength back.”

Levi placed a bowl on the nightstand, but Eren didn’t move to get it. Then, as his captain left the bowl and started to turn away, Eren’s heart jumped in his chest. *Wait*.

“Wait,” he vocalised, voice mumbled against the covers.

Levi turned to look at Eren. “What, brat?”

“Will you stay?” *Will you keep the bad things away?*

“Obviously,” Levi stated. “I don’t trust you enough to be fine on your own anyway. I’m not leaving. Try to get some sleep.”

The soup went untouched.

The next time Eren woke up, it was in a cold sweat. His thoughts started out scattered, and he had to fish them together from the corners of his mind into coherence.

Opening his eyes was all it took for a wave of dizziness to overtake him, and nausea to pulse through his body. It must have been visible in Eren’s face, and the way he moved to hover over the side of the bed, because the next thing he knew he was throwing up into a pail, and a hand rested on his back.

Heat flushed to his head, and his body ached from leaning over, so he just tried to focus on that hand. On the five fingers that sent electricity across his back, because someone was *there* and that made it better.

Levi, Eren’s brain finally identified. His captain looked exhausted, and his eyes were trained on Eren, so it was easy for Eren to conclude that he was the one making things exhausting.

“I’m sorry,” Eren said, gaze lost on the ceiling. “I keep trying but it’s not enough. We still haven’t beat the titans. My mom died for nothing. And Petra. And Oulo and Eld and Gunther-”

“Oi, brat,” Levi said, scrutinizing Eren. His subordinate’s eyes were sedated in sorrow, as if he were watching them die all over again.

Regret was painted all over Eren’s face. It was a feature Levi recognised easily.

Levi rested his arms across his legs, leaning on his knees and facing closer to Eren. “You listened to my orders that day. We’re still here fighting. Nobody has died for nothing.”

“I’m not fighting,” Eren noted. “I’m just lying here.”

“That’s fighting,” Levi corrected. “You’re disgustingly sick. If you remember one thing from this conversation, let it be that this counts as fighting. You’re running a temperature that could rise bread but you’re fighting it, brat. Now shut up and try to think about better things.”

Levi's shoulders hung heavy on his body. He ached for sleep, but that would only come after Eren slept first.

Which was coming faster than Levi thought. "Better things," the shifter mumbled back, eyelids half closed. "Ocean. Like Armin's book."

Levi tensed. He had heard the brats bickering about the ocean before. If it really did exist, he would do everything in his power to let them see it.

Eren swam into consciousness. The room was full of natural light, and he felt the presence of someone else.

Levi was still there, having a conversation with someone.

Mikasa stood in the doorframe. Sunlight streamed in through the window, highlighting one side of her face with light. Her eyes were concerned but she stood calm as she scrutinised Eren. When she noticed he was awake, she smiled.

"You know, Eren," Mikasa said. "Your eyes look just like the ocean."

Eren wracked his head for memories. He was just thinking about the ocean not too long ago, wasn't he? But no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't think of the context.

It didn't matter. Mikasa was downstairs. Eren was cognizant enough to be aware that he was hallucinating again.

"You're not real," Eren mumbled, rolling over in the bed to face the other way. "Go away."

Eren waited a moment for Mikasa to say something mean again, but it never came. Instead, a moment later, something behind him pressed down on the mattress.

It was Mikasa. She looked up at Eren with eyes filled with emotion, and curiosity. Pools of mercury with love about to spill out.

"Historia said you got poisoned," she said. "I was worried."

Eren sat up a bit, looking over to Levi in his chair.

"That's really Mikasa," Levi confirmed. "You brats talk."

Uninterested, in Levi's typical style, he left the room for the first time since Eren first saw Mikasa. Except this time, she was here for real.

Unless Eren hallucinated Levi saying that Mikasa was real. Unless fake Mikasa was trying to trick him by being nice. Unless-

"Eren," Mikasa called, and his eyes locked in with hers.

Mikasa's head was in her arms crossed on the edge of the soft mattress, staring up at her friend. "I can leave, but I just wanted to come see you. I talked to Levi. I was on watch at first, but then I couldn't really get any sleep after."

"I get it," Eren said. "Not getting sleep, I mean."

Mikasa hummed. After a couple minutes, Mikasa hadn't moved, so Eren called her name, but to no response. Her body rose and fell steadily. She was sound asleep.

Eren didn't really have anywhere to go. So, he pulled his blanket tight, and curled closer to Mikasa.

Levi stood in the doorway with Hange, staring at the two sleeping soldiers.

"I want your bed."

End Notes

do you guys like this influx of whump? or do you want more crack? do you like what i'm doing or have anything to say? lemme know because I have a half finished arsenal of both

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